

New claims

(94)

1. Method for applying an imprint or label (6) to an object, such as a container (2, 20), in which:

- 5       - a support belt (5) is fed from a stock roll towards an application head (3), the support belt (5) bearing separated labels (6), wherein each label (6) has an exposed front side and an opposite rear side, the labels (6) being attached to the support belt (5) by means of the rear side,
- an object (2, 20) is fed to the application head (3), and
- 10       - the label (6) is brought into contact with the object (2, 20) with the aid of the application head (3), wherein
- the support belt (5) is fed from the stock roll towards an edge or strip (7), positioned upstream from the application head (3) and is urged over said edge or strip (7) in order to bend the support belt (5) at the location of the edge or strip (7),
- 15       characterised in that,
- the support belt (5) and the label (6) are urged over the edge or strip (7) in order to reduce the adhesion between the support belt (5) and the label (6) and thereafter both the support belt (5) and the label (6) are fed towards the application head (3),
- the support (5) belt is urged towards the object by means of the application head
- 20       (3) in order to bring the front side of the label (6) into contact with the object (2, 20), wherein the front side of the label (6) is provided with an adhesive, the adhesive force between the label (6) and the object (2, 20) during application exceeding the adhesive force between the label (6) and the support belt (5).

25       2. Method according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the support belt (5) is deformed over an angle which is between 45° and 90°.

30       3. Method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, characterized in that the label (6) substantially comprises ink and adhesive.

      4. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the label (6) is heated when it is applied to an object (2, 20).

      5. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the support belt (5) is deformed in the vicinity of the application head (3), at least the upstream end of the label (6) being clamped between the object (2, 20) which is to be

printed and the application head (3) before the support belt (5) is deformed at the downstream end of the label (6).

6. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the label (6) and the support belt (5) are fed past the application head (3), the adhesive of the label (6) being brought into contact with the object (2, 20) as a result of the application head (3) acting on the support belt (5).

7. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the support belt (5) is removed upstream of the application head (3).

8. Method according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the support belt (5), downstream of the application head (3), is moved past a removal strip (11), in such a manner that labels (6) which have remained on the support belt (5) are removed from the support belt (5) by the removal strip (11).

9. Device, clearly intended for carrying out the method according to one of the preceding claims, which device comprises:

- a frame,
- an application head (3) which is attached to the frame and is displaceable with respect to the frame,
- means for feeding a support belt (5) towards the application head (3), separated labels being arranged on the support belt (5), and
- means (10) for removing the support belt (5) from the application head (3) towards a removal roll, characterized in that the device comprises an edge or strip (7) which is arranged upstream of the application head (3) in the path of the support belt (5), which edge or strip (7) comprises a contact surface which extends substantially transversely with respect to the direction of movement of the support belt (5), the edge or strip (7) providing an angle in the path of the support belt in order to bend the support belt (5) at said contact surface in order to obtain local deformation of the support belt (5) at said contact surface.

10. Device according to claim 9, characterized in that the edge or strip (7) is positioned in the vicinity of the application head (3).

11. Device according to claim 9 or 10, characterized in that the distance between the edge or strip (7) and the application head (3) is adjustable.

12. Device according to one of claims 9-11, characterized in that the application head is designed as a roller (3).

13. Device according to one of claims 9-11, characterized in that the application head is designed as a brush (15, 31).

14. Device according to one of claims 9-11, characterized in that that side of the application head (30) which faces towards the objects (2, 20) to be printed is provided with a substantially curved recess.

15. Device according to one of claims 9-14, characterized in that the device comprises a removal strip (11) which is positioned downstream of the application head (3) in the path of the support belt (5).

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